United Nations

Daily Highlights

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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council, in closed session, discusses Iraq's decision to ban use of United Nations aircraft by United Nations Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament; Commission Chairman Rolf Ekeus calls Iraqi action "serious violation" of its obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions.

+ Secretary-General, currently in Paris, expresses great satisfaction at agreement between all Somalis movements in favour of peace and national reconciliation, reached today in Addis Ababa.

+ Relief worker of CARE-Australia killed and two others injured when fired upon by unknown assailants in Suleimaniya, Iraq, yesterday; United Nations asks for investigation of incident.

+ Situation in Angola "dangerously volatile" after fighting escalates in many regions, according to Secretary-General's Special Representative for that country, Margaret Anstee, who is working to organize cease-fire.

+ Secretary-General, in report describing talks in Geneva as "historic" for pursuit of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, urges "reasonable" delay in implementation of ban on non-authorized flights in that region, should Security Council decide to enforce such a ban.

+ United Nations makes available to International Committee of the Red Cross, at its request, helicopter for its representatives to visit Palestinians stranded in southern Lebanon following their recent deportation by Israel.

+ Security Council recommends admission of Czech and Slovak Republics for United Nations membership; General Assembly to consider applications shortly.

+ In Cairo, before leaving for Paris, Secretary-General meets with Egyptian President for discussion of that country's participation in peace-keeping in Somalia and Yugoslavia, among other trouble spots.

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For information media--not an official record

+ Croatia supports proposal by Secretary-General to deploy additional 10,000 United Nations troops on borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina to search for, and turn back weapons or sanctioned goods crossing border in violation of Security Council's resolutions.

+ Socialist Republic of Viet Nam condemns what it calls "Democratic Kampuchea's repeated acts of terrorism and barbarous massacre" against Vietnamese residents who are living legally in Cambodia.

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The Security Council held informal consultations today concerning a letter from Iraq banning the use of United Nations aircraft by the United Nations Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament (UNSCOM) in that country. Rolf Ekeus, Chairman of the Commission, met with the Council this morning to deliver a note he had written concerning the Iraqi action.

Speaking to correspondents following Mr. Ekeus' meeting with the Council, the spokesman of UNSCOM, Tim Trevan, called the Iraqi decision "a very serious violation of [the Commission's] basic privileges and immunities" which would "seriously hinder" UNSCOM's operations in Iraq. He said the Iraqi Government had made it clear that the UNSCOM aircraft would no longer be allowed to land in Iraq. If the Commission wished to use aircraft, Mr. Trevan said, it "must use Iraqi-chartered aircraft and not United Nations aircraft"; otherwise, suggests the Iraqi letter, its members should travel by land. That decision by Iraq was "effective forthwith and indefinitely", said Mr. Trevan.

In reply to a question about the contents of Mr. Ekeus' note to the Council, Mr. Trevan said it recalled that the Iraqi action was in breach with its obligations under resolution 707 (1991) to provide "full, final and complete disclosure of all aspects of its weapons programmes" and with the plans for ongoing monitoring and verification by the Commission.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who is currently in Paris, has expressed great satisfaction at the agreement between all the Somalis movements in favour of peace and national reconciliation, concluded today in Addis Ababa.

In a declaration issued today, the Secretary-General expressed his conviction that the agreement would give a new impetus to the efforts towards a just and durable settlement and that it would "contribute to facilitating the transition from the Unified Command to the second phase of the United Nations Operation in Somalia".

According to the Spokesman for the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNISOM), Farouk Malawi, who participated in the Conference in Addis Ababa, the draft agreement included a pledge by all factions to convene a meeting of national reconciliation during the first week of April. It also included a pledge for a cease-fire across Somalia, setting in motion a mechanism for

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monitoring the cease-fire. According to Mr. Malawi, the Conference on National Reconciliation would be held, most probably in Addis Ababa, under the auspices of the United Nations.

The Secretary-General is expected to submit a report to the Security Council in the next few days concerning the progress achieved.

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A relief worker of CARE-Australia was killed and two others injured when the vehicle they were travelling in was fired upon by unknown assailants in Suleimaniya, Iraq, yesterday, a United Nations spokesman said today. He said the United Nations office in Baghdad has been instructed to immediately request an investigation of the matter by the appropriate authorities.

According to the spokesman, Stuart Cameron of Australia died before reaching the hospital. One of the two injured, which was also Australian, left the hospital after initial treatment, while the local CARE driver is reported to be in serious but not critical condition.

Following the incident, CARE-Australia, which is responsible for the off-loading, storage and distribution of relief supplies provided under the United Nations Inter-Agency Humanitarian Programme for Iraq, has decided to suspend temporarily its activities in northern Iraq. The United Nations has also temporarily suspended movements of its convoys to Arbil and Suleimaniya pending clarification of the situation, the Spokesman said.

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The situation in Angola was "dangerously volatile" after fighting has escalated in many regions of the country, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Angola, Margaret Anstee reported today.

The Secretary-General's Spokesman, Joe Sills, who had received Miss Anstee's report from Angola, told correspondents this morning that in Huambo, representatives of the Angolan Government and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) were talking with representatives of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II), but the situation was still very tense.

The Spokesman went on to say that UNAVEM II was continuing efforts to obtain cease-fire agreements, both locally and countrywide and Miss Anstee had been in constant contact with both sides. Her efforts were focused on organizing a cease-fire as soon as possible, he said.

In a separate development, the Spokesman told correspondents today that the number of United Nations personnel deployed in Mozambique was expected to be between 7,000 and 8,000 at a cost of about $330 million. As for the date of deployment, no decision had yet been made, he said.

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The Council decided in mid-December to establish the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ).

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has called for a "reasonable" delay in the implementation of a ban on non-authorized flights over Bosnia and Herzegovina, should the Security Council decide to adopt a resolution enforcing such a ban.

In a report to the Council, dated 6 January, the Secretary-General also urged the Council to let it be known clearly to all sides in Bosnia and Herzegovina that "it is their duty" to cooperate with the Co-Chairmen for the Yugoslav Conference in ending the conflict in the region as quickly as possible. The Secretary-General further proposed that there be penalties for the obstruction of the peace negotiations.

Informing the Council of the status of the ongoing peace talks in Geneva between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the report describes the talks as "a historic step forward in the pursuit of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina". The Secretary-General reports that all the delegations pledged their cooperation with the Co-Chairmen in search for peaceful solutions and makes the point that it should now "be easier to establish clearly who is cooperating and who is not".

The discussions in Geneva, which will resume on Sunday, are focusing on three critical components: the constitutional principles; the delimitation of provinces; and arrangements for implementing and monitoring a cessation of hostilities.
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The United Nations has made available to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), at its request, a helicopter for ICRC representatives to visit the more than 400 Palestinians who are stranded in southern Lebanon following their recent deportation by Israel.

A United Nations spokesman told correspondents at Headquarters today that the arrangement had been made in agreement with the Lebanese authorities and with the Italian Government, which provided the helicopter and crew.

The ICRC said in a press release issued at Headquarters yesterday that it had received permission from the Israeli authorities to send two delegates -- a doctor and a senior representative from its delegation in Tel Aviv -- to assess the needs of the Palestinians.

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In Cairo today, before leaving for Paris, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali held talks with President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt on a number of issues, including Egypt's participation in peace-keeping operations in Somalia and Yugoslavia, and other trouble spots around the world.

The Secretary-General told reporters at Cairo airport that they had also discussed the question of Libya and efforts to resolve that issue peacefully. He said he had met with the Libyan Foreign Minister in Cairo yesterday and that he was hopeful that a solution would be found to the problem between Libya on one side and the United States, the United Kingdom, France on the other side.

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The Security Council has recommended to the General Assembly that the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic be admitted to United Nations membership. Admission of the two Republics will bring to 180 the total membership of the United Nations.

After the adoption of each resolution, the Council President, Yoshio Hatano (Japan), on behalf of the Council, welcomed both countries' commitment to uphold the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and to fulfil all relevant obligations under it.

Membership in the United Nations is granted to States by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council.

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Croatia has expressed support for a proposal by the Secretary-General to deploy an additional 10,000 United Nations troops on the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina to search for, and turn back weapons or sanctioned goods crossing the border, in violation of the Security Council's resolutions.

In a letter to the Secretary-General of 5 January, Mario Nobilo, the Croatian Permanent Representative to the United Nations, called for the implementation of the Secretary-General's plan in connection with the complete demilitarization of the United Nations Protected Areas in Croatia and the enforced control of Croatia's international borders.

Mr. Nobilo added that the proposal to monitor the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina represented a "more decisive effort" by the United Nations and other international factors to contain the conflict in that region and keep it from spilling over into other parts of the Balkans. The proposal also added the "essential peace-making element to the present humanitarian and peace-keeping role" of the United Nations Protection Force in former Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR), the Croatian Ambassador said.
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The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam has condemned what it calls "Democratic Kampuchea's repeated acts of terrorism and barbarous massacre" against Vietnamese residents who are living legally in Cambodia.

In a letter to the Secretary-General, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam, Nguyen Manh Cam, states that on 27 December 1992, a group of soldiers of Democratic Kampuchea attacked a fishing village in Cambodia in search of Vietnamese "so as to murder them". There, he says, they killed 14 people, including 12 Vietnamese, and injured 14 others. Mr. Cam says that Eric Berman, Deputy Spokesman of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), has reaffirmed that Democratic Kampuchea's forces were responsible for the massacre at the fishing village.

Mr. Cam writes that the Democratic Kampuchea faction's violation of human rights and its obstinate refusal to enter the second phase of the cease-fire in Cambodia have placed the political settlement of the Cambodia problem in very critical danger, challenging the international community and jeopardizing peace and stability in South-East Asia.

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